

## **Nurse Faculty Loan Program (NFLP) Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Application**

**1. What is the application process for NFLP?**

Applicants for the Nurse Faculty Loan Program (NFLP) under funding opportunity announcement number HRSA-16-065 are required to apply electronically through Grants.gov. NFLP applicants will use the SF-424 R&R Application Guide that is accessible through the Grants.gov web site at [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov).

**2. When is the NFLP application due?**

The due date for NFLP funding opportunity is Monday, November 30, 2015 at 11:59 pm Eastern Time. Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit the application ahead of the application due date.

**3. Is the application considered ‘new’ or ‘renewal’ if the school received NFLP funding in past years?**

All NFLP applications are considered “new.” Schools requesting NFLP funding must indicate “New” as the type of application when completing the SF-424 R&R form in Grants.gov. NFLP funds are awarded for a one-year project period.

**4. Are applicants required to submit an application annually?**

In order to receive the NFLP award, application submission is required annually. However, past NFLP grantees should only apply for the NFLP award if additional funds are needed to support students.

**5. When is the NFLP award date for approved applicants?**

Approved NFLP applicants will receive award notification electronically by July 1, 2016. NFLP funds awarded should be used for making loan to students enrolled during the 2016-2017 academic year (fall, spring and summer).

### **Eligibility**

**6. Who is eligible to apply for the NFLP?**

Eligible applicants are accredited schools of nursing or departments within an academic institution that offer an eligible advanced nursing degree program(s).

**7. What nursing degree programs are eligible for NFLP support?**

Eligible nursing degree programs include advanced education masters and doctoral (i.e., PhD, DNP) nursing degree programs. The EdD in Nursing Education is also eligible under NFLP. Nursing degree programs must include educator courses as part of the plan of study.

**8. Does the NFLP recognize the National League for Nursing Commission for Nursing Education Accreditation (CNEA) as an eligible national accrediting body?**

Yes, eligible nursing degree programs (MSN, DNP) must be accredited by a national nurse education accrediting agency recognized by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education. These agencies include the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) or the National League for Nursing Commission for Nursing Education Accreditation (CNEA), previously named the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN). NFLP applicants must submit evidence of accreditation with the application. See additional accreditation information in the funding announcement.

**9. May schools apply if the nursing degree program is new and not accredited?**

Yes, a new nursing degree program is eligible only if the applicant obtains and submits a letter of “reasonable assurance” of accreditation from the Department of Education, or if the applicant provides evidence of provisional accreditation status from CCNE or CNEA.

### **Application Requirements**

**10. Are applicants required to submit a Sample Commitment Letter?**

Yes, applicants must submit a Sample Commitment Letter that the school intends to provide to students that receive NFLP loan support. The sample commitment letter should be submitted as Attachment 7. Applicants are allowed to use their own format.

**11. What is meant by Statement of Employment Partnerships? What are examples of partnerships?**

Applicants are expected to establish and describe the capacity that the school will undertake to support students with obtaining employment. Evidence of a collaborative partnership should include, but is not limited to, activities that are established by the school to prepare and support students with obtaining employment following graduation from their nursing program. Employment activities include faculty mentoring opportunities, campus-based career resources that offer connections to employment agencies or services, or required attendance at national nursing conferences. Evidence of a collaborative partnership can include a description of the working relationship between the grantee and the employing school of nursing. A description of these activities and the partnership must be submitted as Attachment 8. Please be mindful of the 40 page application limit.

**12. When completing the Application Data Form, what dates are required for reporting graduates and graduates employed as nurse faculty under Section 3 of the data form?**

Applicants must first enter the current fiscal year date at the top of the form under Part A. After the current fiscal year date is entered, the dates will auto-populate within the form under Sections E1, E.2 and E3. For the 2016 application, schools should report the expected number of graduates and graduates employed as nurse faculty as of 7/01/2015 through 6/30/2016.

**13. When completing the Application Data Form, what is the process for entering more than one accrediting agency and the expiration dates that are on a different timeframe?**

The application data form will only allow entry for one accrediting agency. Applicants must submit a letter of accreditation for each of the degree programs under Attachment 1. The letter(s) must contain the expiration date or the period of accreditation.

**14. What is meant by "Evidence of Evaluative Measures" when describing Impact and Evaluation?**

To be included in the *Response to Program Purpose, Impact and Evaluation* section, evidence of evaluative measures includes the metrics or tools the applicant has in place to ensure the goal of the NFLP are being met. The evaluation plan must include descriptions of the input, key processes, variables and outcomes expected as it relates to student recruitment, training retention, graduation, loan disbursement activities and ongoing monitoring and tracking of NFLP graduates.

**15. What is meant by "Project Sustainability" and how should applicants address this?**

To be included in the *Response to Program Purpose, Project Sustainability* section, applicants should describe how they plan to sustain the NFLP program. Plan should include, but are not limited to the ongoing selection of nursing students to receive NFLP support, design, implementation and refinement of nursing curriculum to prepare students to apply teaching strategies and effective methods for evaluating student learning outcomes. Sustainability must include lessons learned and/or best practices to train nurse faculty and assist graduates with obtaining full-time nurse faculty employment. Sustainability must also include the process to manage and monitor the revolving NFLP loan fund.

**Borrower Requirements:**

**16. What if a student signs the commitment letter and drops from the program, or does not obtain employment as nurse faculty?**

If the commitment letter is signed by the borrower, and the borrower does not complete the nursing program or obtain faculty employment, the borrower will be liable for repayment of the loan at the prevailing market rate for the term of the 10-year loan repayment period. The school would not be responsible for repayment of the loan. It is the responsibility of the school and the loan collection agency to collect on and track students receiving NFLP funding.

**17. Can a student receive NFLP loan support if they have already taken educator course(s) at another school? Would these education courses count?**

A student that is requesting NFLP support must complete all of the specified educator courses within the school providing NFLP funding. Schools *may* grant a waiver for a required educator course, at their own discretion, based on meeting course equivalency requirements as determined by the school. It is not recommended that schools waive educator courses. It is not recommended that schools waive the requirement for education courses unless the student can clearly demonstrate they have taken education courses that meet all the course objectives of the education courses that the NFLP school offers.

**18. Can a student receive NFLP loan support to enroll in a doctoral degree program if they already have a master's degree in nursing and are currently working as nurse faculty?**  
Yes.

**19. Does the NFLP loan accrue interest at the prevailing market rate if the student borrower is unable to find employment?**

Yes, if the borrower does not complete the program or does not obtain full-time faculty employment at an accredited school of nursing within 12-months of graduation, the loan interest rate is set at the [prevailing market rate](#).

**20. Can a student apply for NFLP loan support in their last semester?**

Graduate nursing students are required to complete educator coursework with the intention to become full-time nurse faculty at an accredited school of nursing in order to be selected for NFLP loan support. If a student has taken the required educator courses, signed the letter of loan commitment and intends to obtain full-time employment as nurse faculty, the student is eligible to receive NFLP loan support during any point toward completion of their degree program. Support for dissertation activities, without meeting the NFLP requirements, is not the intention of the program and as such is not allowable.

**21. Are schools required to make loans to previous NFLP students ahead of new students?**

NFLP grantees are expected to make loans to continuing and new students in accordance with the disbursement plan as described in their application.

**22. How does NFLP define full-time faculty?**

Full-time employment may include several faculty positions. For the purposes of Nurse Faculty Loan Program loan cancellation, “full-time” nurse faculty employment is defined by the employer of the NFLP borrower. The institution providing NFLP support to a borrower is able to cancel a portion of the loan based on the hiring institution’s designation of full-time.

**23. How does NFLP define the full-time nurse faculty role?**

Nurse Faculty is defined as an academic educator or academic/clinical educator position at an accredited school of nursing. Under NFLP, a part-time faculty role, part-time clinical instructor role or non-academic role does not qualify.

## **Reporting Requirements**

**24. When is the NFLP performance report due?**

NFLP Performance reports are due once a year on July 31st. Reports are released through EHB on or about the 1<sup>st</sup> of July and then are due NLT 30 days after release. The next performance report for all current NFLP schools is due July 31, 2016.